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Mindfulness Resources in Lewiston, ME

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Mindfulness Resources in Lewiston, ME

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Example Exercise

Eating One Raisin: A First Taste of Mindfulness

Mark Williams, John Teasdale, Zindel Segal, and Jon Kabat-Zinn (2007). *The Mindful Way through Depression: Freeing Yourself from Chronic Unhappiness*. New York: Guilford Press.



Mindfulness – How can it help?

Mindfulness can be defined as open-hearted, non-judgmental, present moment awareness.

- **Evidence-based Benefits**
 - **Decreased:**
 - Blood pressure
 - Anxiety, stress, & depression
 - Chronic pain
 - Medical care visits (inpatient and outpatient)
 - **Increased:**
 - Immune function
 - Ability to act effectively under stress
 - Self-esteem
 - Quality of life
- **Anyone can benefit from mindfulness practice**
 - Especially useful resource to support mental health

Why Lewiston benefits from a brochure on mindfulness

1. **COST:** Approximately 19.9 percent of Mainers are enrolled in Medicaid and 126,000 are uninsured (Maine has not passed Medicaid expansion either!)
 - **Mindfulness doesn't require any equipment to practice, i.e. low/no cost**
2. **NEED FOR MENTAL HEALTHCARE RESOURCES:**
 - Average of **180 suicide deaths per year**
 - ONLY 33 percent of adults who live with serious mental illnesses are provided with services by the state
 - **Mindfulness is an aspect of Dialectical Behavioral Therapy (DBT), useful for treatment mental health issues, specifically proven to improve functioning for patients with borderline personality disorder**
3. **AWARENESS:** Mindfulness is not well-advertised or understood as a means for increased health and well-being
 - Potential to serve more diverse populations if presented without bias or religious connotations
4. **ACCESS:** There are many resources locally and on the internet that are not widely known (and often inexpensive or free)



Public Health Costs

Stats:

- According to Health Canada (2009), stress and stress-related symptoms account for 85% of all visits to doctors.
- Maine spent \$354 per capita (\$463.8 million) on mental health agency services in 2006

Cultivating mindfulness in the community could reduce fiscal and loss-of-life costs from mental health-related problems by:

- Reducing stress of patients AND providers!
- Decreasing the burden of mental health services on the state budget
- Providing resources to those struggling with mental health

Community Perspective of Mindfulness

Name withheld, MD of Central Maine Family Practice

“A big thing for our patients is cost—[with mindfulness] you don’t need to get a gym membership, you can sit in a park or wherever!”

Name withheld of Inner Light Yoga

“In each yoga class I talk about a theme, a method to mindfulness. For example, how the breathe is always a part of you, waiting for you to soften to it.”

Name withheld and ***Name withheld*** of Life Ideals

“Mindfulness focuses on stress reduction, and by reducing chronic stress, you reduce chronic illness.”

“Thoughts exist about three times: past, present, and future. Negative thoughts about the past cause sadness; *persistent* negative thoughts about the past cause depression.”



Intervention/Methodology

- **Research:**
 - Variety of mindfulness practices and health benefits of mindfulness
 - local and internet resources on mindfulness
 - Met with local community members involved in mindfulness
- **Design brochure for family practice to disseminate**
 - Definition of mindfulness & its health benefits
 - Introduce diversity in mindfulness practices
 - Compiled local and internet resources
 - Example mindfulness exercise

Results

How to Practice Mindfulness



There are thousands of ways to practice mindfulness including:

- Sitting meditation
- Walking meditation
- Yoga
- Guided imagery
- Chanting
- Breath exercises
- Mindful eating

Choose which practices work for YOU!

How Mindfulness Can Improve Your Quality of Life

Family Medicine Residency
76 High St.
Lewiston, ME 04240



Mindfulness

Mindfulness can be defined as open-hearted, non-judgmental, present moment awareness.



Thoughts, beliefs, emotions, and stress all have a great impact on health and illness. Mindfulness is one of a variety of "self-regulatory practices" which individuals can learn to do for themselves to promote their own health and well-being.

Benefits of Mindfulness:

- Decreased:
 - Blood pressure
 - Anxiety, stress & depression
 - Chronic pain
 - Medical care visits
- Increased:
 - Immune function
 - Ability to act effectively under stress
 - Self-esteem
 - Quality of life

Helpful Hints for your Mindfulness Practice



Tips for your Mindfulness Practice

- Expect your mind to wander! Practice kindness and patience with yourself when this happens and gently return awareness to the breath.
- Be careful not to try too hard when practicing mindfulness. Don't try to make anything happen, or to achieve any special states or any special effects! Simply relax and pay as much attention as you can to what is here now.

Local Resources

- **Life Ideals** – Health counselors that help you incorporate mindfulness across 6 self-care practices.
- **Inner Light Yoga** – Trisha Bremner is a health coach and yoga teacher with classes especially focused on mindfulness offered at CMMC every Tues/Thurs 6:30-7:45PM.
- **The Patrick Dempsey Center for Cancer Hope and Healing** offers mindfulness meditation classes free to the public.
- The CMMC Family Medicine Residency is starting a **Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR)** class soon! Check the Integrative Health website for start dates and more information.

Links for these resources can be found on the CMMC Integrative Medicine web page:
<http://www.cmmc.org/integrative-medicine-services-offered>

Internet Resources

- UVM has a variety of mindfulness audio clips, ranging 3-20 minutes in length
<http://www.uvm.edu/~chvb/p/psych/?Page=exercises.html&SM=mindfulnessmenu.html>
- UCSD offers more mindfulness audio clips plus yoga audio/video, ranging 10-50 minutes in length
<http://health.ucsd.edu/specialties/mindfulness/mbsr/Pages/audio.aspx>
- Recommended Readings on Mindfulness
<http://astore.amazon.com/ucsc-enformin-20>

The 4-7-8 Relaxation Breathing Technique

Breathe in through your nose for 4 counts, hold for 7 counts, and breathe out through your mouth for 8 counts with a whoosh sound. Do this for 4 breaths.

Recommended twice a day; you cannot do it too frequently. You can also use this technique when you are feeling upset or anxious, or to help you sleep.

Evaluation of effectiveness & limitations

- Effectiveness could be evaluated with a patient and/or provider survey
 - Understanding of mindfulness
 - Interest in mindfulness
 - Opinions about the brochure
- Limitations:
 - Only reaches patients of this practice that read well in English
 - Limited local resources/classes
 - Internet resources can only be reached by those with internet access
 - Mindfulness practice requires dedication to reap benefits

Future interventions/projects

- Develop and advertise a Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) class with Dr. Lovett
- Develop handouts for patients about various mindfulness exercises

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